Religious Views of Abraham Lincoln

Orrin Henry Pennell.

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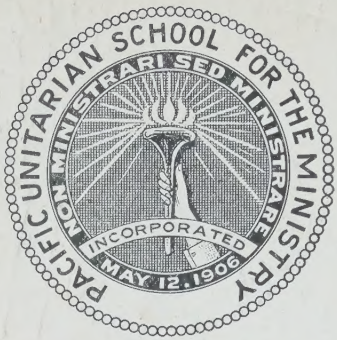

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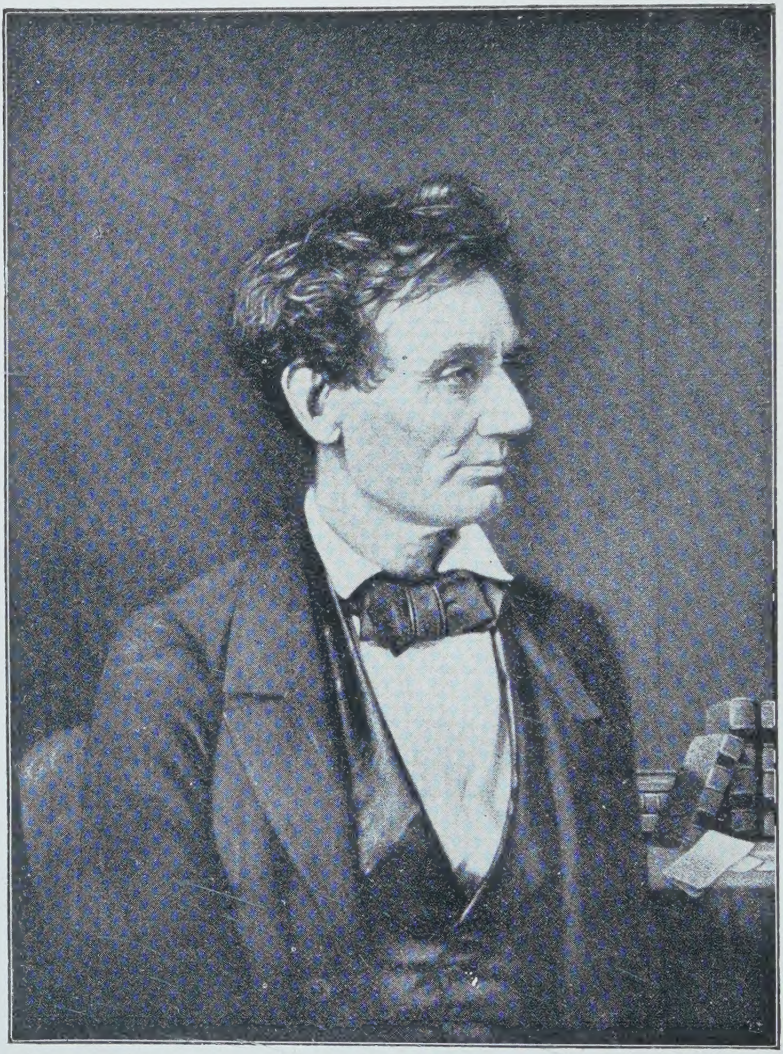


ABRAHAM LINCOLN

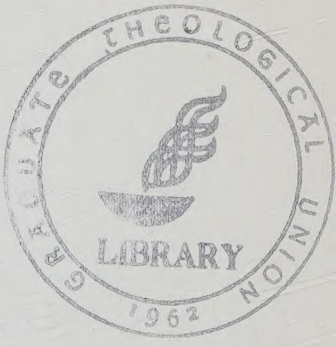
RELIGIOUS VIEWS

OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

COMPILED AND PUBLISHED BY

Orrin Henry Pennell.



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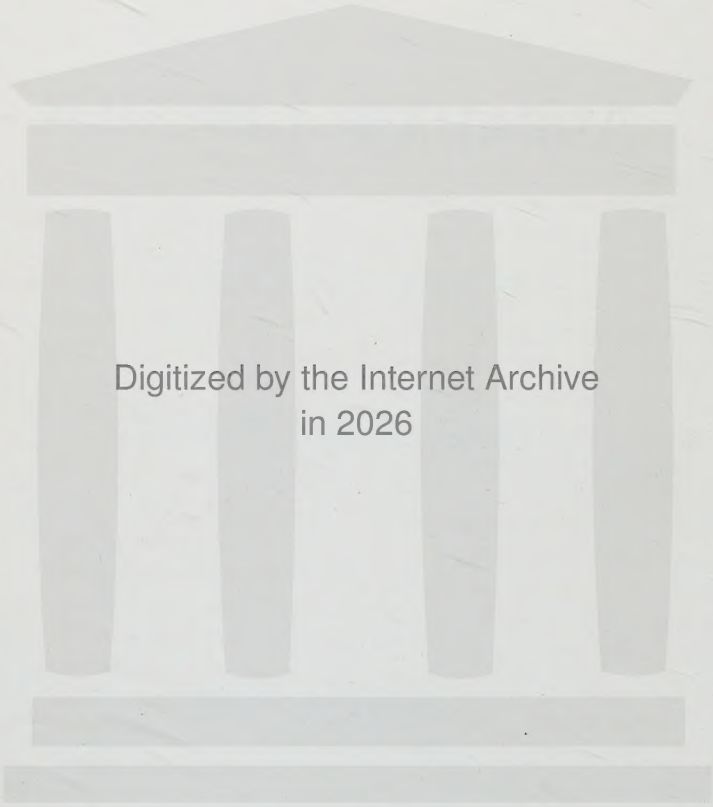

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PREFACE.

The author feels that no apology is needed in giving out this booklet to the public. For several years, he has sought to lay under tribute everything which might give light upon the subject herein discussed. Much could be said of the claims made by Spiritualists in insisting that Lincoln looked with favor upon their peculiar doctrine. Likewise, the Universalists have come in to announce that Mr. Lincoln threw out friendly glances at them. The author has sufficient material upon the religious glimpses of Lincoln to fill a five hundred page volume. Had the book been swelled to a full grown work, the price would have limited its sale and many would never read it because of its size. The author feels that confining the matter in these humble limits, will do more in enlightening people in regard to what Mr. Lincoln believed in spiritual things than in a more pretentious work. He has been compelled to waive the discussions and claims made by exponents of different doctrines, and devote the entire work to the question whether Abraham Lincoln was a Christian or an Atheist, No thought of money-making has prompted the attempt to give out this work. The price has been placed at such a figure as to assure neither loss nor gain to the writer. Hoping that by placing our ear near the heart of our great martyr, we may be able to hear him sing his songs in the night.

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RELIGIOUS VIEWS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Christianity needs not the names of the great and powerful ones of earth to make it respectable or worthy of acceptation. From the four quarters of the earth the praises to our holy religion arise like the voices of many waters. From every clime and from every tongue, the name of our Lord is exalted. Nations and rulers bow before Jehovah's awful throne. A religion which has drawn to its altars the lights which have set the measure to the march of civilization, needs not to claim its devotees among those who are uncertain in their religious tone.

While it adds nothing to the truth of our holy religion, if Abraham Lincoln received it as a little child receives gifts from its parents; neither does it subtract from its credibility, though he rejected it; yet it is with joy we read that in the time of trouble he besought God to "hide him in the secret of his tabernacle." It has been one of the favorite customs of the free thought world to fasten the badge of infidelity on all great men, had such ones ever expressed during their lifetime one word of doubt as to the authenticity of the Scriptures or to the divinity of Christ. Not one of the presidents from Washington down to Harrison, according to the liberal press, were orthodox Christian communicants. Washington, Franklin, Chase, Beecher and a host of others, whose names have adorned our political constellation, have been laid under tribute by the exponents of free-thought.

Was Abraham Lincoln a Christian man? What were his views in regard to religion? How did he view the

Bible? These are honest questions which should not be condemned, regardless of the source from which they spring. It does seem reasonable that after so many years elapsing since his death, some well formulated statement might be given out in response to these questions. The study of Lincoln, today, amounts to little less than a mania. Magazines teem with articles dealing with some phase of his life. Of the writing of books there seems to be no end. His old Kentucky birth place has become a Mecca to many admirers of the man. Springfield and Sagamon county have literally been laid under tribute. Old neighbors of Lincoln have been interviewed, courthouses have been ransacked which might bring out anything old or new concerning his earlier years. All persons ever privileged to have interviews with him, and there are not a few, are not slow in giving the substance of the same to the world. Generals, senators, governors, and, in fact, all who ever had audiences with him in regard to any matters, jealously retain such rare moments in everlasting rememberance. Even across the Atlantic his name seems to have gathered fragrance in its transit. Dr. Newman Hall, of London, one of the most eminent preachers in Great Britain, declares that the mentioning of the name of Lincoln to his great congregation has an electrifying effect. Yet, notwithstanding all that has been gleaned concerning this great man, the old question still comes ringing in our ears: "Was he a Christian?" It would be a falsehood to attempt to fix the name of Lincoln with any denomination. It would be a still greater folly to associate him with any formulated creed.

No man's views among all Americans, has caused so much discussion as those of Lincoln's. There are reasons for this: Mr. Lincoln never allied himself with any visible church. On the other hand, his life and utterances would stamp him as a believer of the most ultra kind. This apparent inconsistency is the foundation for all the discussion which has arisen of late years in regard to the views he entertained in matters of religion.

STATEMENT OF THE INFIDEL PRESS.

The "Truth Seeker" of New York, the most popular free-thought journal in America, and, perhaps, enjoying the largest circulation of any liberal paper published in our land, made the following statement recently: "In regard to a Supreme Being he entertained at times Agnostic and even Atheistic opinions. During the later years of his life, however, he professed a sort of Deistic belief, but he did not accept the Christian or antropomorphic conception of a Deity.

"So far as the doctrine of immortality is concerned, he was an agnostic.

"He did not believe in the Christian doctrine of inspiration of the Scriptures. He believed that Burns and Paine were as much inspired as David and Paul.

"He did not believe in the doctrine of Christ's divinity. He affirmed that Jesus was either the son of Joseph and Mary, or the illegitimate son of Mary.

"He did not believe in the doctrine of special creation.

"He believed in the theory of evolution, so far as this theory had been developed in his time.

"He did not believe in miracles and special providence. He believed all things are governed by immutable laws, and that miracles and special providences, in the evangelical sense of these terms, are impossible.

"He rejected the doctrine of total, or inherent depravity.

"He repudiated the doctrine of vicarious atonement."

Accompanying the above statements, was a picture of Lincoln underneath the words, "Free thinkers of the past and present."

Two books have found their way to the press, written obviously, to stem the current of the fast growing opinion that Lincoln was a Christian. One book was written by a Mr. John E. Remsburg of Atchison, Kansas. The other by Mr. Herndon, law partner of Lincoln's and an old time skeptic. The whole burden of Mr. Remsburg's book deals with the questions of his religion. In this volume he in-

geniously and ably attempts to show that Lincoln was not a Christian. He has brought into requisition, every bit of evidence accessible. Christian and liberal testimony is given, and then with a wave of his hand he silences the Christian testimony by pronouncing it false. The other book, by Mr. Herndon, deals with the personal side of Lincoln. Mr. Herndon, however, did not forget his primary object in writing his volume. The latter part of the book is devoted to the task of removing the stain of Christianity thrown around Lincoln.

Ingersol, in his eulogy on Mr. Lincoln, represents Lincoln as hostile to the whole claim of Christianity.

LINCOLN FROM CHILDHOOD TO 1860.

Mrs. Lincoln, the mother of the president, was a woman of the deepest religious feeling. Her character was the most exemplary, and she was affectionately devoted to her family. She had found time in the midst of her busy life to teach her son to read and write. Her deep devotional nature impressed inefficably on Abraham the love of truth and justice, love and reverence for God which characterized his entire life. "These virtues were even associated in his mind with the most tender love and respect for his mother." Later in life when the delicate form of his mother remained but as a sweet memory, he said: "All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."

He was not long permitted, however, to enjoy the devotions of a mother. She died when her son was only nine years old.

> "My boast is not that I derive my birth
> From loins enthroned and rulers of the earth,
> But higher far my proud pretensions rise,
> The son of parents passed into the skies."

Sad, indeed was the humble Indiana home in which the mother breathed her last! The lad would go about his humble work mechanically, with his heart pierced. The burying ground in which she was laid to rest, was perhaps half a mile from the cabin. There, under a sycamore tree they dug the grave and laid away the mother of the president. The funeral services were in keeping with the surroundings, simple but solemn. At that time there was no minister to officiate. "Perhaps," says Arnold; "the first practical use the boy made of the acquisition of writing, was to write a letter to Rev. David Elkin, a traveling preacher, whom the family had known in Kentucky, begging him to come over and perform religious services over the grave

of his mother. The preacher came, but not until some months afterwards, traveling on horse-back through the wild forests to reach their residence. There the family gathered with a few of their friends and neighbors, under the sycamore to hear from the lips of the minister an account of the mother's life and of the City Beyond."

Mr. Raymond in his "Life and Public Services of Abraham Lincoln," adds the following: "One of the very first efforts of his faltering pen was writing a letter to an old friend of his mother's, a traveling preacher, urging him to come and deliver a sermon over her grave. The invitation must have been couched in impressive, if not affecting language; for, although the letter was not written until nine months after his mother's remains had been deposited in their last resting place, Parson Elkins, the preacher to whom it was extended, responded to the request, and three months subsequently, just a year after her decease, preached a sermon commemorative of the virtues of one whom her neighbors still held in sacred and respectful remembrance. It is said that the parson in his discourse, alluded to the manner in which he had received the invitation. "His faith in Divine Providence began at his mother's knee, and ran through all the changes of his life. Not orthodox, not a man of creeds, he was a man of simple truth in God."(Arnold's Life of Lincoln.)

The boyhood of Lincoln was not characterized by anything supernatural. Says one of his biographers (Col. John Hay.) "We are making no claim of saintship for him. He was merely a good boy, with sufficient wickedness to prove his humanity."

From his boyhood until he settled in Springfield, there is very little known of the religious tone of Lincoln which is reliable. One thing is certain, that while he resided in New Salem, he was thrown continually into the society of Free Thinkers. One of these associates has risen up, and, in a reckless way, portrays Lincoln as a monster. He claims

he went to church only to scoff. That he would mock the preachers, and ridicule prayer. One of these men has gone so far that he even claims Lincoln to have written a book against Christianity. Another claims it as only a tract; while still another believes it to have been an essay. This supposed booklet is claimed to have attacked the whole system of Christianity. The work, however, was suppressed by his friends, they fearing that it would annihilate his popularity and future political prospects. It is gratifying to know that the author of these sweeping charges has been silenced in his traduction. Persons whose names were coupled in these assertions, have promptly disclaimed any knowledge of the stains charged against Lincoln. The probability is that the whole matter is a sheer fabrication. Possibly, his faith faltered in those days. He read Volney, Paine, Hume, Gibbon, and other liberal books. His friends of the liberal faith have attempted to make much capital out of such reading. It proves nothing. Many a genuine orthodox minister has gone through all of these works without implicating himself. Again the enemies of Christianity claim that because of his logical mind, it was impossible for him to reason by faith, This is too absurd. Let them forget not that Copernicus, Kepler, and Newton were earnest Christians who saw the hand-writing of God in the works of nature!

In Miss Ida M. Tarbell's "Life of Lincoln," the following appears: "There was no institution in Springfield in which Lincoln had not taken an active interest in the first year of his residence, and now that he had decided to remain in the town, he resumed all his old relations, from the daily visits to the drug stores on the public square, which were the recognized rendezvous of Springfield politicians and lawyers, to his weekly attendance at the First Presbyterian Church. That he was as regular in his attendance on the latter as on the former, all his old neighbors testify."

In 1851, his father lay dying. He wrote a letter of

consolation addressed to his half brother, John Johnson. Lincoln writes: "I sincerely hope father may recover his health, but at all events, tell him to remember to call upon and confide in our great and good and merciful Maker, who will not turn away from him in any extremity. He notes the fall of a sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our heads, and He will not forget the dying man who puts his trust in Him."

Of the genuineness of this letter, there never has been any question. In another part of this same letter he adds: "Say to him if it be his lot to go now, he will soon have a joyous meeting with loved ones gone before, and where the rest of us, through the help of God, hope ere long to join him."

There are several remarkable statements in this epistle. He fully acknowledges the efficacy of prayer. He partially quotes one of the most endearing expressions of our Savior and applies it to the father's state. He believes in, yea, he longs for an immortality.

While residing in Springfield, he oftentimes was called upon to deliver temperance addresses. More than once, he addressed Sunday School and Bible Society Conventions. In every good work, he was conspicuous. The Bible was consulted and quoted as freely as Blackstone. After 1845, he very seldom made a speech without alluding to the Scriptures.

Events from 1850 to 1860 traveled fast. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise, the outrages in Kansas, the Dred Scott Decision, and John Brown's raid, had raised the country to a high pitch of excitement. In the succession of these events came the Chicago Convention which nominated Abraham Lincoln for President. There were already rumors of secession in the air. President Buchanan had allowed the conspirators of the nation to sit in the cabinet and carry out their treasonable designs. All felt that some crisis was imminent. The Democratic party by the division of its power, was overthrown in the presidential election.

THE FAMOUS BATEMAN INTERVIEW.

During the exciting time from Lincoln's nomination until his inauguration, he was given rooms in the state house in which he received delegations of friends who came to pay him their respects. Hon. Newton Bateman was Superintendent of Public Instruction at the time, and occupied rooms in the same building. These men became very intimate. Often when crowds of people had dispersed for the night, Mr. Bateman would slip into Lincoln's room and, there, they would spend an hour discussing the political movements which were stirring the land. According to Holland's "Life of Lincoln," the following conference took place: "On one of these occasions Mr. Lincoln took up a book containing a careful canvass of the city of Springfield in which he lived, showing the candidate for whom each citizen had declared it his intention to vote in the approaching election. Calling Mr. Bateman to a seat at his side, having previously locked all the doors, he said: 'Let us look over this book. I wish to see particularly how the ministers of Springfield are going to vote.' The leaves were turned, one by one, and as the names were examined Mr. Lincoln frequently asked if this one and that were not a minister, or an elder, or the member of such a church, and sadly expressed his surprise on receiving an affirmative answer. In that manner they went through the book, and then he closed it and sat silently and for some minutes regarding a memorandum in pencil which lay before him. At length he turned to Mr. Bateman with a face full of sadness and said: 'Here are twenty-three ministers, of different denominations, and all of them are against me but three; and here are a great many prominent members of the churches, a very large majority of whom are against me. Mr. Bateman, I am not a Christian—God knows I would be one but I

have carefully read the Bible, and I do not so understand this book,' and he drew from his bosom a pocket New Testament, 'these men will know,' he continued, 'that I am for freedom in the territories, freedom everywhere as far as the Constitution and laws will permit and that my opponents are for slavery. They know this, and yet, with this book in their hands, in the light of which human bondage cannot live a moment, they are going to vote against me. I do not understand it at all.' Here Mr. Lincoln paused—paused for long minutes—his features surcharged with emotion. Then he rose and walked up and down the room in the effort to regain or to retain his self-possession. Stopping at last, he said with a trembling voice and his cheeks wet with tears. 'I know there is a God and that He hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that His hand is in it. If He has a place for me, and I think He has, I believe I am ready. I am nothing, but truth is everything. I know I am right, for Christ teaches it, and Christ is God.'

The effect of this conversation upon the mind of Mr. Bateman, a Christian gentleman whom Mr. Lincoln profoundly respected, was to convince him that Mr. Lincoln had, in his quiet way, found a path to the Christian standpoint, that he had found God and rested on the eternal truth of God. As the two men were about to separate, Mr. Bateman remarked: 'I have not supposed that you were accustomed to think so much on this class of subjects. Certainly your friends are ignorant of the sentiments you have expressed to me.' He replied quickly: 'I know they are. I am obliged to appear different to them; but I think more upon these subjects than upon all others, and I have done so for years; and am willing that you should know it.'"

For years, infidels have tried to get over this Bateman affair. Hon. Newton Bateman was well known throughout the state of Illinois. He was a man of sterling qualities. No

one ever questioned his honesty or truthfulness, until this conversation was given out to the world. Some of the friends of free-thought have come out and boldly denied the whole story as a falsehood. Others have admitted that the interview took place and that Lincoln denounced the ministers and churches as above stated, accounting for the small vote Lincoln received in Springfield to his skeptical sentiment which he was always expressing. Still other enemies of the church, seeing an opportunity of giving Christianity a thrust, received the conversation as a fact thereby showing where ministers and churches stood on the slavery question. They deny the latter part of the interview, however, explaining that Mr. Bateman was excited or agitated and over-represented the interview. Another scheme has been advanced to invalidate this story. The Bateman interview was first given out in Holland's "Life of Lincoln." One infidel writer affirms that Holland put his story of Bateman's in his book without consulting Bateman himself. That after the book was published Bateman was urged to put out a denial to the whole matter. This writer continues to say that the only reason assigned by Bateman for not disavowing it was that, "my aversion to publicity in such matters is intense." In all of these attempts to destroy the story, the truth has become more self-evident.

HIS LAST HOUR IN SPRINGFIELD.

The morning he left his old home, a large number of his old neighbors accompanied him to the depot. As he stood upon the platform of the car he uttered the following words: "My friends:—No one, not in my position, can realize the sadness I feel at this parting. To this people I owe all that I am. Here I have lived more than a quarter of a century. Here my children were born and here one of them lies buried. I know not how soon I shall see you again. I go to assume a task more difficult than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never would have succeeded except for the aid of Divine Providence, upon which he at all times relied. I feel that I cannot succeed without the same Divine blessing which sustained him; and on the same Almighty Being I place my reliance for support. And I hope you, my friends, will all pray that I may receive the Divine assistance, without which I cannot succeed, but with which, success is certain. Again, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

This farewell speech, like the Bateman interview, has received a great deal of attention from those who would claim Lincoln an infidel. They would have the world to understand that these pathetic and pious words of Lincoln, were but the request that they should wish him well. Some newspapers, in commenting on these farewell words, call them "Old Abe's Latest Joke." They were words which came from a soul bowed down with the thought of a burden so soon to be laid upon him. His old neighbors understood them as words coming from a heart acquainted with grief. When a little more than four years later, his body was borne into the state house, the following couplet, in allusion to his departure was placed over its door:

"He left us borne up by our prayers;
He returns embalmed in our tears."

Rev. Dr. Birch who was a witness to his departure adds the following: "As I stretched my vision across the thirty-four years which have rolled away since the rainy morning of February 11th, 1861, I count that brief experience one of the great privileges of my life. The lapse of time only deepens the impression of the long, gaunt form with its thoughtful face, as in the true simplicity of his real greatness, Abraham Lincoln lingers on the rear platform of the car to take his last look at the old home and to say his last words to his townsmen."

President McKinley states that the night before the good president left Springfield, to start on his way to Washington, a friend from Chicago sent him a flag of our country, bearing these words, taken from the first chapter of Joshua, and written upon its silken folds: "Have I not commanded thee; be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord, thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life. As I was with Moses, so shalt I be with thee."

The Psalmist says, "Thy statutes have been my song in the house of my pilgrimage." As he journeyed across the country to the seat of the government, all along his circuitous route, he failed not to declare to the people that he was going forth in the name of the Living God of Israel. Truly God's statutes became the song of his pilgrimage!

At Columbus he said: "I turn then to God for support who has never forsaken the people. A reliance on God." At Steubenville: "Nothing shall be wanting on my part, if sustained by the American people and God." At Buffalo: "I must trust in that Supreme Being who has never forsaken this favored land." At Albany: "I still have confidence that the Almighty, the Maker of the universe, will bring us through this." At New York City: "Aided by the wisdom of Almighty God." At Newark: "I am sure, however, that I have not the ability to do anything unaided

of God." At Trenton: "I shall be most happy, indeed, if I shall be an humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty, and of this his most chosen people, as the chosen instrument, also in the hands of the Almighty of perpetuating the object of that great struggle." At Philadelphia: "I have said nothing but that I am willing to live by, and, if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, die by."

LINCOLN AND PROVIDENCE.

Perhaps, there never was a ruler who felt and believed in the intervention of God in human affairs to such an extent as Abraham Lincoln. There might be given a good sized volume of matter, showing his belief in special Providence.

When a young man, Lincoln made his second trip down to New Orleans with a cargo of produce. After having disposed of the cargo, he and one of his fellow boatman, sauntered through one of the great slave marts. Here were gathered planters from all parts of the Southwest. Black men and women were arranged in rows for sale. The auctioneer would show their good qualities by inviting his purchasers to examine them as you would so many horses or mules. Should any of the slaves happen to be Christians, and the fact known to the crier, he would boldy proclaim it hoping thereby to get a higher figure. Again and again the hammer fell. Husbands separated from wives, parents from children, brothers from sisters. Lincoln and his friend witnessed these doings. His lips quivered, and his voice choked in his throat as he turned to his companion and said: "If ever I get a chance to hit that thing, I will hit it hard by the Eternal God."

Dr. David Gregg in commenting over this New Orleans scene makes the following comment: "Who is he to hit the 'thing' a blow? He is only a boatman, a splitter of rails, a teamster, a backwoodsman, nothing more. His poverty is so deep that his clothes are in tatters. What position of influence or power is he likely to attain to enable him to strike a blow? The 'thing' which he would like to hit is incorporated into the framework of society, and legalized in half the states composing the Republic. It is intrenched in church and state alike. It is a political force, recognized

in the Constitution. It enters into the basis of representation. Is there the remotest probability that he ever will be able to smite such an institution? Why utter these words? Why raise the right hand to heaven and swear the solemn oath? Was it some dim vision of what might come to him through Divine Providence in the unfolding years? Was it an illumination of the Spirit forecasting for the moment the impending conflict between right and wrong in which he was to take a conspicuous part? Was it a whisper by a divine messenger that he was to be the chosen one to wipe the 'thing' from the earth, and give deliverance to millions of his fellowmen? Was it not rather the mind and heart and power of God planted deep in the depth of his very being and abiding there with an holy impatience waiting for the clock of destiny to strike?"

HEARING REV. PETER AKERS PREACH.

Dr. Akers was one of the most eminent preachers in the Methodist Episcopal Church, during the days when slavery was the great bone of contention. He unsparingly denounced slavery as a sin, and a sin which would receive a merited punishment from God in his own good time. In 1837, Lincoln, with a company of friends, visited a camp-meeting a few miles out of Springfield, on which occasion Dr. Akers preached. On this occasion the preacher painted the wickedness of slavery in all its cruel form. He predicted a great war which would follow this blighting curse. That slavery would receive its death through the struggle. He always pictured how the nation would receive a new baptism of freedom when the sin was no more.

On returning from this service the preacher's sermon was the only subject of discussion. Lincoln remarked: "It was the most instructive sermon and he is the most impressive preacher I have ever heard. It is wonderful that God has given such power to men. I firmly believe his interpretation of prophecy, so far as I understand it, and especially about the breaking down of civil and religious tyrannies, and odd as it may seem, when he described those changes and revolutions, I was deeply impressed that I should be somewhat strangely mixed up with them."

In 1849 he wrote to his friend, Joshua Speed, concerning his own social troubles: "Whatever He designs, He will do for me. 'Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord' is my text now."

In the North American Review of 1896, the following from the pen of Ex-Senator James F. Wilson, illustrates the feeling of the president during the dark days of the war. Mr. Wilson with several other gentlemen, had called upon the president eliciting information as to the condition of the army and its movements. After each of the callers had

given his views concerning slavery and the advisability of an immediate proclamation, he responded as follows, "My faith is greater than yours. I not only believe that Providence is not unmindful of the struggle in which this nation is engaged, that if we do not do right God will let us go our own way to our ruin; and that if we do right, He will lead us safely out of this wilderness, crown our arms with victory, and restore our dissevered union,as you have expressed your belief; but I also believe He will compel us to do right in order He may do these things, not so much because we desire them as that they accord with His plans of dealing with this nation, in the midst of which He means to establish Justice. I think that He means that we shall do more than we have vet done in the furtherance of His plans and He will open the way for our doing it. I have felt His hand upon me in great trials and submitted to His guidance, and I trust that as He shall further open the way, I will be ready to walk therein, relying on His help and trusting in His goodness and wisdom."

It can readily be seen that every time Mr. Lincoln expressed himself in regard to the dispensation of Providence, he, on each occasion, breathes out a strong faith in the Almighty. As the war progressed he more clearly saw the mysterious movements of God. At last he saw himself as we now see him, an instrument in the hands of God.

After the Emancipation Proclamation was given to the world, colored people, wherever the grand message went, nearly went wild with delight. On plantations their weeping was turned into joy; in churches, where they were wont to assemble for worship, their souls mounted high in Thanksgiving to God for their emancipator. Colonel McKay who was a member of a committee to investigate the conditions of the colored people, after having reported his investigation to the president, related to him how the lately freed slaves looked upon him as their liberator. Mr. Lincoln replied: "It is a momentous thing to be the instrument, under Providence, of the liberation of a race."

Those were eloquent days when one man held the key which would bid a whole race rejoice. Long had prophets of freedom foretold that happy day. For years all over the north the friends of the lowly had cried themselves to sleep with the burning thought that part of the people were in chains. The friends of the oppressed had been killed, incarcerated and insulted by the slave oligarchy. They, too, were more defiant each year. Nothing would satisfy them until their blood hounds could lacerate their victims under the shadow of Bunker Hill. Now it looked as though human slavery had fed on its last victim. The veteran abolitionist saw his day and was glad. Already the president had hinted that the Constitution granted him the power to remove slavery as a military measure. He still waited! Congress was not unmindful of the great moment. The friends of human slavery were bringing to bear their best efforts to stay the hand of the emancipator. It was too late? He spoke and it was done. As the paper was brought to him by the secretary of State to be signed, he said: "Mr. Seward, I have been shaking hands all day and my right hand is almost paralyzed. If my name ever gets into history it will be for this act, and my whole soul is in it. If my hand trembles when I sign the proclamation those who examine the document hereafter will say he hesitated." Then taking up his pen, having rested his arm for a moment, slowly and firmly wrote Abraham Lincoln. He smiled as, handing the paper to Mr. Seward, he said: "That will do." Then was fulfilled the saying of him who had exclaimed thirty and five years before: "If I ever get a chance to hit the accursed thing, I will hit it hard, by the Eternal God."

The hopes, prayers, and rejoicing of these millions of bondmen found expression in the following words of Whittier.

"We pray de Lord, He gib us signs
Dat some day we be free;
De Norf wind tell it to the pine,
De wild duck to de sea.

We tink it when the church bell ring
We dream it in de dream;
De rice bird mean it when he sing,
De eagle when he scream.

De yam will grow, de cotton blow,
We'll hab de rice and corn;
Oh neber you fear if neber you hear
De driver blow his horn.

Sing on, poor heart! your chant shall be
Our sign of blight or bloom—
The gala-song of liberty,
Or death-rune of our doom."

Mr. Lincoln was charged during the war as being too ambitious. His antagonists in the North even dared whisper, "dictator," "usurper," "Cromwell." Some saw in this kind and gentle spirit, only a tyrant. He was indeed, clothed in vast power. No president was ever so much trusted by Congress as was Lincoln. As David said of his God, "I will sing aloud of thy mercy," even so can the world sing of the beloved Lincoln. It is true that on a question inviting right and wrong he would not be moved. He would reach over into the national legislature and make his influence felt in that body. More than once he moved out on certain political lines against the advice of his cabinet. He had reached that place in his great career that he could say with Paul. "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." He was not a fatalist. Only interpreting the mind of God and acting accordingly without fear or favor. Time has vindicated his actions. If ever he erred, it was on the side of mercy.

Says the gifted Henry Watterson in a most beautiful, truthful and eloquent tribute to the great emancipator: "Born as lowly as the Son of God, reared in penury and squalor, with no gleam of light nor fair surroundings, it was reserved for this strange being, late in life, without fame or name or seeming preparation, to be snatched from obscurity, raised to a supreme command at a supreme moment, and

intrusted with the destiny of a nation. Where did Shakespeare get his genius? Where did Mozart get his music? Whose hand smote the lyre of the Scottish plowman and staid the life of the German priest? God alone, and as surely as these were raised by God, inspired of God was Abraham Lincoln. A thousand years hence, no story, no tragedy, no epic poem will be filled with greater wonder than that which tells of his life and death. If Lincoln was not inspired of God then there is nothing on earth as special providence or the interposition of divine power in the affairs of men.''

WHEN DID LINCOLN BECOME A CHRISTIAN?

Infidels think they have, forever, silenced the claims that Lincoln was a Christian on the grounds that the defenders of the faith disagreed among themselves as to the time when he is supposed to have embraced religion. One Free-Thinker on commenting on the statement of Dr. Barrows, concerning the date of his (Mr. Lincoln's) conversion, cynically adds: "This is the fifth time Lincoln gave his heart to God."

These different testimonies offered by Christians from the four quarters of our land, conflicting as to the time alleged when Lincoln became a Christian, need not cause any one to falter. Let it be remembered that the Christian world has not yet arrived at an unanimous conclusion as to what conversion is. Farrar says: "A conversion may be said to be that change in the thoughts, desires, disposition and life of a sinner which is brought about when the Holy Ghost enters the heart as the result of the exercise of a saving faith in the atonement, by which the sinner is justified."

This is the view held by one man only. There are multitudes of people, rich in scholarship and Christian experience as Farrer, who view the whole subject in an entirely different light. Visible and distinct bodies of communicants hold their indentity upon their respective views of the nature of conversion. If he ever became a Christian it was entirely a matter of the heart. He was never baptized or received into any visible church. It was a matter of a Christian experience, then, or nothing. We will study his own language, hear his own confessions, and mark his life to ascertain whether he possessed the spirit of Christ.

Frank Carpenter who knew Lincoln, perhaps as

intimately as anyone outside of his own family expresses the following: "Mr. Lincoln, referring to what he called a change of heart, said he did not remember any precise time when he passed through any special change or purpose, or of heart; but, he would say that his own election to office, and the crisis immediately following, influentially determined him in what he called 'a process of chrystalization, then going on in his mind.' Carpenter recites another incident which adds to the testimony already given. A lady in the service of the Christian Commission had occasion in the prosecution of her duties, to have several interviews with the president. Naturally their conversation would turn toward the subject of religion. They talked of Christian experience and matters of a kindred nature. Being invited by the president to give her views as to what constituted a religious experience, she readily consented. After she had clearly set forth her views, Mr. Lincoln responded as follows: 'If what you have told me is really a correct view of this subject, I think I can say with sincerity, that I hope that I am a Christian. I had lived until my boy Willie died without fully realizing these things. That blow overwhelmed me. It showed me my weakness as I had never felt it before and if I can take what you have stated as a test I think that I can safely say that I know something of that change of which you speak; I will further add that it has been my intention for some time at a suitable opportunity to make a public religious profession.'"

Dr. James Smith, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church at Springfield, in the days of Lincoln's residence there gives the following testimony: "It is a very easy matter to prove that while I was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, Mr. Lincoln did avow his belief in the Divine authority and inspiration of the Scriptures; and I hold that it is a matter of the last importance not only at the present, but all future generations of the great Republic, and to all advocates of civil and religious liberty throughout

the world, that this avowal on his part, and the circumstances attending it, together with very interesting incidents illustrative of the excellence of his character in my possession should be made known to the public." This Christian gentleman then adds how that he set before Mr. Lincoln arguments advanced by the infidel world and along side of it he placed arguments calculated to show the authenticity of the Scriptures. Mr. Lincoln, after careful examination of the proofs, for and against Christianity, pronounced the argument in favor of divine authority and inspiration of the Scriptures unanswerable. This testimony of Mr. Smith's has been confirmed by words of attestation from Hon. Ninian Edwards, brother-in-law of the president, and also from people still living who were formerly members of Dr. Smith's church.

Mr. Noah Brooks, newspaper correspondent and a bosom friend of Lincoln's while he was president, gives us many pen pictures of the personal side of Lincoln's life. He gives us the following glimpses of the man. "I never tried to draw anything like a statement of his views from him, yet he freely expressed himself to me as having 'a hope of blessed immortality through Jesus Christ.' " Again he comments upon Lincoln: "Once or twice, speaking to me of the change which had come upon him, he said, while he could not fix any definite time, yet it was after he came here and I am very positive that in his own mind he indentified it about the time of Willie's death. In many conversations with him, I absorbed the firm conviction that Mr. Lincoln was at heart a Christian man, believed in the Savior and was seriously considering the step which would formally connect him with the visible church on earth." Once he said in commenting on the church and its doings, "When any church will inscribe over its altars as its sole qualification for membership the Savior's condensed statement of the substance of both law and gospel,'thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all

thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself,' that church will I join with all my heart and soul.' "

If Mr. Lincoln, himself cannot give any set date when he accepted Christ, yet conscious of "Peace in believing," how absurd it would be for others to attempt to fix that moment!

LINCOLN AND PRAYER.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh.
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air,
His watchword at the gates of death,
He enters Heaven with prayer.

One of the most conclusive evidences showing the sincerity of purpose of Saul of Tarsus, was that "Behold he prayeth." If praying to Jehovah stamps a man a believer, surely Abraham Lincoln can be numbered among God's anointed. He made supplications to God in secret as well as in public. He announced it in official papers, as well as to individuals. Free Thinkers, unable to deny the fact of his supplication, come boldly forward and inform us that Lincoln's praying must not be confused with the orthodox prayers. Mr. Herndon, the old law partner of Lincoln, and a notorious exponent of infidelity attempts to analyze Lincoln's prayers. He employs the following words to show forth prayer: "Did Mr. Lincoln believe in prayer as a means of moving God?" Mr. Herndon, referring to Lincoln's last farewell address at Springfield, when he asked his townsmen to pray for him, comments as follows: "These expressions are merely conventional. They do not prove that Mr. Lincoln believed that prayer is a means of moving God. He believed, as I understood him, that human prayer did the prayer good; that prayer was but a drum beat—the taps of the spirit on the living human soul, arousing it to acts of repentance for bad deeds done, or inspire to a loftier and higher effort for a nobler and grander life." Of all the definitions given to prayer this is certainly the most novel

yet known. The man who offers this exposition on prayer is the same gentleman who refused to believe in Lincoln's conversation in Washington on the score that: "If Mr. Lincoln changed his religious views he owed it to me to warn me." In other words he feels that Lincoln would certainly have informed him had he ever been converted. While it might be comforting to the hearts of some prophets and followers of Paine to hang unto these words of Herndon in an almost idolatrous way, receiving them as the last words and will of Abraham Lincoln, to hear the great man speak for himself is far more gratifying. On one occasion a friend was talking to him about the burden of government which was pressing him toward the grave. He was reminded by his friend that millions of people were praying, not to be heard of men, in his behalf. He caught the words, "not to be heard of men." "Yes," says Lincoln, "I like that phrase, " not to be heard of men," and guess it is generally true as you say; at least I have been told so and I have been a good deal helped by just that thought."

The interview which Gen. James F. Rusling had with Lincoln immediately after the battle of Gettysburg, is sufficiently conclusive to sweep away the last vestige of infidelity urged against the man.

The story has been given to the public of late years. It is not so late, however, to be considered apocryphal. General Sickles, who is still living, fully confirms the story. It is of such paramount importance that the entire interview will be given.

Says General Rusling: "The next time I saw Mr. Lincoln was on July 5, 1863—the Sunday after the battle of Gettysburg. He had come down from the Soldiers' Home with his little son, "Tad," to call on General Daniel E. Sickles, of New York, who had arrived in Washington that morning, having lost a leg at Gettysburg. I also had called to see Sickles (my corps commander then), and was there still when Lincoln was announced. They shook hands

cordially, if not pathetically, and after many inquiries about the killed and wounded and how the latter was faring, Mr. Lincoln passed next to the fact of our victory at Gettysburg, and what Meade proposed to do with it. Sickles, of course, answered him warily, as became so astute a man and soldier, and got his side of the story of Gettysburg well into the President's mind and heart and presently inquired whether he and the cabinet had not been a little anxious about affairs there? Mr. Lincoln replied, the cabinet had but he had not; and then went on to make candid confession that in the very pinch and stress of the Gettysburg campaign he had gone to the Almighty in secret prayer. He said he told the Lord this was His country, and the war was His war, but that we could not stand another Fredericksburg or Chancellorsville; and that he then and there made a solemn vow with his Maker that if He would stand by us at Gettysburg he would stand by Him; and then he added: 'And He *did*, and I *will!*' He said, after thus praying, he didn't know how it was, but somehow a sweet comfort crept into his soul that God Almighty had taken the whole business there into His hands, and we were bound to win at Gettysburg.

Afterward, in the same interview, he added he had also been praying over Vicksburg, because we needed it so badly in order to bisect the Confederacy and save Mississippi to the Union, and he somehow had faith that Grant was going to win down there too. He said he didn't want it repeated then; some might laugh; but it was a solemn fact that he had prayed mightily over both Gettysburg and Vicksburg, and verily believed our heavenly Father was somehow going to take care of the American republic. Of course Mr. Lincoln did not know that Vicksburg had already fallen and that a Union gunboat was then on its way up the Mississippi to Cairo with the glorious news that was soon to thrill the country through and through.

Gettysburg and Vicksburg!—our great twin victories!

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

What were they not to us in that fateful summer of 1863? And what would have happened to the American Republic had both gone the other way. Of course it will not do to say that Abraham Lincoln's faith and prayers saved us there; but they certainly did not do the Union any harm. And his serene confidence in victory there because of these (or resulting therefrom), was something beautiful to behold on that memorable July 5, 1863.

I never saw Mr. Lincoln again. In November, 1863, I was ordered west to Tennessee, and was there still in 1865, when he was assassinated. But this conversation made a deep impression and I need scarcely add settled the question of his religious faith with me and General Sickles forever. Whatever Mr. Lincoln may have been in earlier years and under narrower conditions, it is certain that our great war, as it proceeded involving a whole continent with world-wide and timelong results, sobered and steadied him and anchored him on God as the Supreme Ruler of nations as a like experience sobered and anchored William of Orange and Cromwell and Washington; and in the end Abraham Lincoln became a ruler worthy to rank with even these. Of all the great figures of our Civil War, Lincoln alone looms up loftier and grander as the years roll on, and his place in the pantheon of history is secure forever."

LINCOLN AND THE BIBLE.

"The rolling sun, the changing light,
And nights and days, Thy power confess,
But the best volume Thou hast writ,
Reveals Thy justice and Thy grace."

At the beginning of this work, a statement was set forth showing just what the infidel world credited to Lincoln as being his views touching the salient features of a religious belief. This is one of the assertions: "He did not believe in the Christian doctrine of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. He believed that Burns and Paine were as much inspired as David and Paul." In another place the following statement is made which is yet bolder: "He wrote a book against the Bible." Burns, we never shall forget, was one of Lincoln's favorite authors. This great genius of Scotland, however, became enslaved by the rum power and bowed himself down at its shrine. With all his greatness of heart; with all his hatred of vice and hypocrisy, his last days were clouded by the sin of intemperance.

Thomas Paine, the man, who for some time was a good patriot and for a still longer time, a writer against the Bible and whose last days were spent in attempting to villify the noble Washington, is placed alongside of Burns; and these two men brought forward to receive the same credit for inspiration as David and Paul.

It cannot be denied that Lincoln was familiar with the writings of all the above named authors. Did Lincoln really compare the two profane authors with the two sacred authors in regard to inspiration, or was it another reckless statement born in the mind of some enemy of God's word?

In the Lincoln Museum at Washington City there is an old copy of the Bible. It shows that it has been well studied, its pages are well worn by constant handling. On the in-

side of the cover are these words in the handwriting of its owner: "A. Lincoln, his own book."

This is the book that received the same attention as did Blackstone. In his early triumphs at the bar, the Bible found a conspicuous place in his pleadings. His political addresses were pregnant with selections from the Scriptures. His joint discussions with Douglass abound with thoughts and quotations selected from the Sacred Writ. The friends of Free-Thought have tried to explain this wholesale use of the Scriptures by Mr. Lincoln with very poor results. They allege that since the Bible abounds in rich imagery and wealth of language, the president employed it without any other thought than its literary and rhetorical features. This explanation would be quite satisfactory had Lincoln been cut off at the beginning of his presidency. We will see that his public and private utterances in his later life clearly demonstrate whether he looked on the Bible as merely a human production or whether it was given to the world by inspiration. His famous declaration. "A house divided against itself cannot stand," is borrowed from the New Testament.

Did he employ this expression because it seemed to suit the occasion or because it was found in the Scriptures and thus was truth? Again, he in writing to his brother in regard to his father's sickness says: "He notes the fall of a sparrow and numbers the hairs of our head." Did he select these words in the presence of his dying father because of their literary adaptation or because they are words of consolation dropped from the lips of the Savior? About a year before his assassination, in a conversation with his old time friend, Joshua Speed, he remarked I am profitably engaged in reading the Bible. Take all of this book upon reason that you can and the balance on faith, and you will live and die a better man."

The colored people of Baltimore, desirous of showing their love for their emancipator, presented him with a

beautiful copy of the Scriptures. After the presentation address was concluded he responded in the following language: "In regard to the Great Book I have only to say, that it is the best gift which God has given to man. All the good from the Savior of the world is communicated through this book." If Lincoln believed the Bible to be an uninspired volume, why did he employ such extravagant words? Did he do it to tickle their ears? If he did he could be no less than a hypocrite. Now, if he felt that the Scriptures were only a man-arranged scheme, it was his duty to tell these poor, deluded negroes that they were mistaken. A man who could write a fatherly letter to Hooker, telling him of his weakness; a man who had the fortitude to express his opinion to a Democratic delegation from Ohio in regard to Vallandigham had certainly the moral strength to make known his views in regard to that Book! No, those words of his on this occasion were the expression of his heart.

His second inaugural address is perhaps the most quoted document ever given out by any American President. He there remarked. "Both read the same Bible." Why was this sentence thrown into his address? One writer whose views are hostile to Christianity remarks as follows in regard to the expression quoted above: "What a commentary upon the hypocritical assumption that Christians possess an infallible moral standard, is contained in the above words." This sage of free thought assumes that Lincoln had an old time grudge against the Bible and Christianity in general and thus takes the occasion on his second inaugural to air his views. Of all the comments on that last inaugural address, the words of this infidel expositor are the most ridiculous.

Mr. Arnold, commenting on this address of the president's, uses the following beautiful words: "Since the days of Christ's sermon on the mount, where is the speech of emperor, king or ruler, which can compare with this? May we not, without irreverence, say that passages of this ad-

dress are worthy of that holy Book, which daily he read, and from which, during his long days of trial, he had drawn inspiration and guidance? Where else, but from the teachings of the Son of God, could he have drawn that Christian charity which pervades the last sentence in which he so unconsciously describes his moral nature: 'With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right.' No other state paper in American annals, not even Washington's farewell address, has made so deep an impression upon the people as this." He adds further: "This paper in its solemn recognition of the justice of Almighty God, reminds us of the words of the old Hebrew prophets."

Chief Justice Chase administered the oath of office to the president. After this part of the ceremony was over Mr. Lincoln kissed the Bible which was open before him. His lips touched the 27th and 28th verses of the 5th chapter of Isaiah. The verses read thus: "None shall be weary, nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the lachet of their shoes be broken, whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind."

All in all it was the most impressive inaugural service ever witnessed. The day of the ceremony had been stormy until the hour of twelve. Then the Sun came out from behind the darkness illuminating the large assembly who had gathered to witness the inaugural. This time, too, the Chief Justice who administered the oath of office had a heart that was right toward the Union. On the former occasion four years before, that magistrate's heart was with the South. Four years before, he was an untried man from the prairies; on this occasion the nation, yea, the whole world looked upon him as one of the most remarkable men of the age.

HIS RELATION TO THE SABBATH.

"Hail to the Sabbath day!
The day divinely given.
When men to God their homage pay,
And earth draws near to heaven.

The Temple is the arch
Of yon unmeasured sky;
The Sabbath, the stupendous march
Of vast eternity."

The Sabbath is the citadel of American institutions. It has been assaulted by foreign and domestic foes.

Anarchists, agnostics, saloon-keepers, and imported religious doctrines, savoring strongly of eastern mixture, are found arrayed against this bulwark of freedom. One exponent of infidelity declares that: "Lincoln himself attached no more sanctity to Sunday than to other days. He worked on Sunday himself. In Springfield his Sundays were frequently spent in preparing cases for court. In company with his boys he often passed the entire day making excursions into the country or rambling through the woods that skirted the Sangamon. He seldom went to church either in Springfield or Washington." Rev. Dr. James Smith, already quoted, declares that he usually attended church with his wife. This Dr. Smith was for a long time pastor of a Presbyterian church in Springfield. He was highly respected by Mr. Lincoln who appointed him to a consulship in Scotland.

How does his Sabbath profanation measure up with the following general order in regard to Sabbath observance in the public service? The order was given Nov. 16th, 1864: "The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, desires and enjoins the orderly observance of the Sabbath by the officers and men in the military and naval service. The importance for man and beast of the prescribed

weekly rest, the sacred rights of Christian soldiers and sailors, a becoming deference to the best sentiment of Christian people, and a due regard for the Divine will, demand that Sunday labor in the Army and Navy be reduced to the measure of strict necessity. The discipline and character of the national forces should not suffer, nor the cause they defend be imperiled by the profanation of the day or the name of the Most High. 'At this time of public distress (adopting the words of Washington in 1776), men may find enough to do in the service of their God and their country without abandoning themselves to vice and immorality.'" The first general order issued by the Father of His Country after the Declaration of Independence indicated the spirit in which our Institutions were founded and should ever be defended. "The General hopes and trusts that every officer and man will endeavor to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier, defending the dearest rights and liberties of his country." In enlarging on this remarkable order, one of his biographers adds: "the date of this remarkable order leaves no possibility for insinuation that it sprang from any political purpose or intention. Mr. Lincoln has just been re-elected by an overwhelming majority; his party everywhere was triumphant; his own personal popularity was unbounded; there was no temptation to hypocrisy or deceit. There is no explanation of the order except that it was the offspring of sincere convictions." As usual, there are always some apologists of free thought ready to fully explain the words and acts of the president. One offers the following: "This document gives expression to sentiments regarding the sanctity of the Christian Sabbath that Lincoln personally did not entertain. It was issued to appease the clamor of the clergy who demanded it, and was drafted, not by Lincoln, but by some pious Sabbatarian." Very little is known, indeed, of the clergy besieging the president to issue an army order in regard to Sabbath observance. Every author of the life of

Lincoln tells the same story, however, that how from the assault on Fort Sumpter until the emancipation was given out, he was importuned by delegation after delegation to issue an emancipation proclamation. It would be just as reasonable then, to say that Lincoln at heart was not in the matter but he submitted to the clamor of the people. One infidel writer explains away all of the references to Providence, prayer, Sabbath observance, etc., by declaring it some of "Seward's nonsense."

While Mr. Lincoln was president, he was responsible for every act of the government. If any order or statement was given out without his knowledge or against his views, it was his duty to disavow the whole matter. This he did do in regard to the Mason and Slidell affair. Also, when Generals Fremont and Hunter issued orders in regard to the liberation of slaves, he quickly corrected such proclamations. Would it seem reasonable then that Secretary Seward could sit in the cabinet for almost five years with the president continually writing state papers without the knowledge or consent of the president? Infidels would have us believe that Secretaries Chase, Stanton and Seward added to or took from the body of the president's papers at their will. If such were the case we will never be able to ascertain from whom emanated the Emancipation Proclamation, the Thanksgiving Proclamation, or the issuing of the call for the first seventy-five thousand troops. No, we will never think of Abraham Lincoln controlling his administration with his hands tied. It would rob him of his greatness. It would reduce him to an effeminate character bowing to the dictate of higher powers.

But if it will be contended that the president acquiesced to the clamor of his advisers, being at heart opposed to these sentimental expressions of religion appearing in his state papers, the following matter ought to silence such ones for all time. This document was penned when the fate of the Republic seemed to have hung in a balance. It is a paper

which Mr. Lincoln wrote in September, 1862, while his mind was burdened with the greatest question of his life. The future of the country looked dark. Not one star of hope appeared. Already thousands of lives had been offered on their country's altar. A large portion of his own party was dissatisfied with him. Jealously was rife in the army. The counsel of friends was unavailing. The Confederacy was gaining sympathy and prestige in Europe. Wearied with all the considerations of law and expediency with which he had been struggling for two years, he withdrew himself into seclusion of mind. As Moses retired, for a time, from the scenes of his labors and drew up into the Mount with Jehovah, leaving the cares at its base, so did Lincoln rise above the wrangling of men and parties and ponder the relation of human government to the Divine. In this frame of mind, absolutely separated from any earthly consideration, he wrote this meditation. It was written not to be seen of men. It was written in the awful sincerity of a perfectly honest soul trying to bring itself into a closer communion with its Master.

"The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be and one must be wrong. God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time. In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party; and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to effect his purpose. I am almost ready to say that this is probably true. That God wills this contest, and wills that it should not end yet. By his mere great power on the minds of the now contestants, he could have either saved or destroyed the Union without a human contest. Yet the contest began. And having begun, He could have given the final victory to either side any day. Yet the contest proceeds." The probability is that not one member of the cabinet ever beheld this meditation. It was the breathing of his heart to be unheard by human ears. The song of Mirian finds a counterpart in this flight of human contemplation of the majesty of God.

LINCOLN AND HIS RELATION TO THE CHURCH AND THE CLERGY.

"I love thy Church, O God!
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my tears and toils be given,
Till toils and cares shall end.

Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways,
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise."

It is no wonder that in war, involving the question of human slavery and the dissolution of the best government ever organized by men, should find such an array of church power on the side of freedom. From one end of the loyal states to the other, the churches seemed to vie with each other in thundering forth their voices in behalf of humanity and patriotism. Many of the pupils of the North for fifty years, had championed the cause of the oppressed. Now, in hundreds of instances, ministers left their pulpits to go forth and fight for the same cause. The most conservative churches were not far in the rear of the most advanced in bearing testimony in behalf of the Union. From the Roman Catholic Church down to the humble Quaker Communion, religious bodies put themselves on record for liberty. A small volume might be written recording the resolutions of assemblies, conventions, conferences, synods, and yearly meetings. As the war advanced each year the tone of these convocations became more decided. Only one or two fragments of these deliverances can here be given. The New School Presbyterian Church lifted up its voice in the following strain: "Since the day of your inauguration,

the thousands of our membership have followed you with unceasing prayer, besieging the throne of grace in your behalf. When we look at the history of your administration hitherto, and at the wonderful way in which the people have been led under your guidance, we glorify God in you."

The president was not unmindful of these testimonies. He responded to one of these bodies in the following words: "It has been my happiness to receive testimonies of a similar nature from, I believe, all denominations of Christians. This to me is most gratifying because from the beginning I saw that the issues of our great struggle depended on the divine interposition and favor. As a pilot, I have used my best exertions to keep afloat our Ship of State, and shall be glad to resign my trust at the appointed time to another pilot more skillful and more successful than I may prove. In every case and at all hazards, the government must be perpetuated. Relying, as I do on the Almighty Power, and encouraged, as I am by these resolutions which you have just read with the support which I receive from Christian men, I shall not hesitate to use all the means at my control to secure the termination of this rebellion and will hope for success."

To the Methodist Episcopal Church he spoke as follows in his benediction upon them: "God bless the Methodist Church. Bless all the churches. Blessed be God who in this our great trial giveth us the churches."

The Quakers were placed in a delicate position by the war. One of the great principles of the Friends, is the opposition to war. Now, these people hate slavery fully as much. When the war came and they saw that it was either death to slavery and the breaking up of the Union, or slavery forever and anarchy, they were much perplexed as a body. It was with these conditions in his mind that the president sent the following letter to Mrs. Gurney, the wife of a famous English preacher of the communion of Friends.

"My esteemed Friend: I have not forgotten—probably never shall forget—the very impressive occasion when yourself and friends visited me on Sabbath forenoon, two years ago; nor has your kind letter, written nearly a year later, ever been forgotten. In all, it has been your purpose to strengthen my reliance on God. I am much indebted to the good Christian people of this country for their constant prayers and consolation and to no one of them more than to yourself. The purposes of the Almighty are perfect and must prevail, though we erring mortals may fail to accurately perceive them in advance. We hoped for a happy termination of this terrible war long before this; but God knows best and ruled otherwise. We shall yet acknowledge His wisdom and our own error therein. Meanwhile we must work earnestly in the best light he gives us, trusting that so working still conduces to the great ends he ordains. Surely he intends some good to follow this mighty convulsion, which no mortal could make and no mortal could stay. Your people, the Friends, have had and are having a very great trial. On principle and faith opposed to both war and oppression. They can only practically oppose oppression by war. In this hard dilemma, some have chosen one horn and some the other. For those appealing to me on conscientious grounds, I have done, and shall do, the best I could and can, in my own conscience, under my oath to the law. That you believe this, I doubt not, and believing it, I shall still receive for my country and myself your earnest prayers to our Father in heaven "

Over against this startling testimony we will insert some words from an infidel already quoted (Remsburg.) He sees Lincoln looking on the churches with a frown. "No president, probably, was ever so much annoyed by the clergy as Lincoln. The war produced an increased religious fervor, and theological tramps innumerable, usually labeled "D. D.," visited the White House each with a mission to perform and a precious morsel of advice to offer."

It is singular, indeed, that any man would rise up and make such groundless charges. Of the thousands of ministers who called upon Lincoln, probably there was not one who ever received a snub or an insult from him. He lived on the best terms with all the churches. Such ministers as Beecher, Gray, Simpson, Sunderland, Gurley and Smith, ministers who have visited him repeatedly, and conversed with him freely on divers themes, are swift to bear testimony of his Christian sentiments and character.

HIS CARICATURES OF RELIGION.

The churches of the land often became a butt against his humor and indignation. In the former case, he was giving his witty vein a treat without malice or feeling against any body or thing. Right or wrong ministers and good people have indulged in these pleasantries from time immemorial till the present without being questioned. In the case of Mr. Lincoln, however, the enemies of Christianity think they have a good case showing with what irreverence Mr. Lincoln viewed the institution.

On the other hand when his wrath was turned against any church or man it was not to condemn Christianity but to expose hypocrisy. He studied the Bible for himself. He knew for what Christianity stood. When seeing a church or individual professing to be a follower of Christ and living or voting contrary to the ideas set forth by the sermon on the Mount, he was not slow to expose such inconsistency.

John the Baptist, Christ, Paul, Whitefield, Edwards, and a host of servants of God too numerous to mention, have been just as severe on hypocrites without ever being branded as enemies of the church.

In what is known as "Lincoln's lost speech," the following arraignment of the churches is given: "We see it in Christian statesmen, and Christian newspapers, and Christian pulpits applauding the cowardly act of a low bully, who crawled upon his victim behind his back and dealt the deadly blow." In another part of the same address, he appeals to the people in this fashion: "Can we as Christian men, and strong and free ourselves, wield the sledge or hold the iron which is to manacle a new and already oppressed race?"

He denounced the ministers of Springfield for withholding their votes from him when he stood for freedom while Douglass stood for bondage.

In his last inaugural address, he uncovers pharisaical worship in the following lines: "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces. But let us judge not, that we be not judged." In whatever way we view the president's denunciations, we can only see what a high conception be had of what Christ taught.

CHARGE OF DEISM AND INFIDELITY IN HIS CAMPAIGNS.

Lincoln stood before the people time and again, as a candidate to receive their suffrage. He was in his state legislature for several years. He sat for one term in the national House of Representatives. He ran for United States senatorship once, and stood up twice as a candidate for presidency of the republic. According to his own testimony he never was beaten by the people but once. Then, as now, a man who offered himself for public office was severly dealt with by his antagonists. The man figured quite as large in a campaign as the principles for which he stood. Lincoln, not being a member of any church, was a great target at which to shoot. His opponents thought that in this fact they saw a vulnerable spot. Regardless of his opponent's veneration for religion, the charge of infidelity would be good political ammunition. The capital, however, which his enemies hoped to make out of the matter was not very productive of good results.

Lincoln generally ran ahead of his ticket. Let it not be forgotten, too, that the sections of Illinois which elected him to office were not unknown to the footsteps of the churches. That part of the state at an early period was settled by stalwart Christians from the eastern and southern states. In his campaigns for the state legislature the charges of infidelity were only whispered. Several years ago when he ran for Congress against the celebrated Peter Cartwright, there were bold charges of Deism urged against him. Cartwright himself was not unfamiliar to the ways of political campaigns, having figured many times prior to this in such matters. Cartwright was one of the most venerated and unique figures in the Methodist Church at that time. Methodism, even at that period, numbered its people by the thousands in that state. It would seem, indeed, that a candidate,

known as an avowed infidel, and running for office in a district largely peopled by Christian voters, would stand a very slim chance for office. It came to pass, however, that Abraham Lincoln ran far ahead of his ticket in his campaign with Cartwright. There is only one way to account for this phenomenal vote: that the people who knew him the best did not believe the charges. The whole matter was only a political trick to reduce the vote for Lincoln.

If we hearken to all that is waged against a candidate for office, such a one appears like a monster or a miscreant of the foulest type. We can never forget that he who reposes in the tomb at Mt. Vernon when candidate for the presidency, was denounced as a dictator, mimicing the ways of the crowned heads of Europe; let it not be forgotten that the lamented and Christian president Garfield was accused as a receiver of bribes while in Congress. Keeping in mind that these things must need come we can clearly see why in those days of feverish excitement anything could be legitimately employed which might cripple the opposition.

A few years later when Lincoln measured strength with Douglass in the senatorial race, the old charge of infidelity was forgotten. Lincoln had not changed in these few years, but other weapons were employed which might have a more telling effect. Infidelity, then, need not probe into the past in order to draw out comfort in this line. They will find out that even in those days the charge of Deism and freethought urged against Lincoln was indignantly denied by the people.

MODE ADOPTED TO INVALIDATE CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY.

In almost every instance where an author has attempted to show Lincoln to have been a Christian, that author has, at once, received the most scathing vituperation from some infidel quarter. Mr. Lincoln, once, wisely said, "By a course of reasoning, Euclid proves that all the angles in a triangle are equal to two right angles. Now, if you undertake to disprove that proposition, would you prove it false by calling Euclid a liar?" In the face of the above well-known saying of that good man, his would-be admirers have sought to cripple Christian testimony by calling the authors harsh names. To show the desperation of their case, a few instances of these abusive criticisms will be noted. One of the earliest and possibly one of the best biographies of Mr. Lincoln given out is that of Holland. Mr. Holland was in his day a journalist of no limited influence. His skillful pen has placed him in the household of American literature. The following is the estimation put upon his excellent work by a follower of Paine: "Holland parades the subject of his work as a model of Christian piety. He knew that this was false, for, while he was unacquainted with Lincoln, he had been apprised of his unbelief, had been repeatedly told of it before he wrote his biography. But this did not deter him from asserting the contrary. He knew that if he stated the facts the clergy would condemn his book. They needed the influence of Lincoln's great name to support their crumbling creed, and would have it at any sacrifice, particularly when its possession required no greater sacrifice than truth." The above traduction needs no comment.

Hon. Isaac Arnold also has given to the world a splendid volume upon the life and character of Mr. Lincoln. Hon. Robert Lincoln, son of the great emancipator, assures the author of this little work, that Mr. Arnold has well done his

work in describing his father's religious tone. Mr. Arnold had a large place in his heart for President Lincoln. The Chicago district sent him to the national house of representatives repeatedly. He had almost daily interviews with Mr. Lincoln while he was president. An infidel disposes of Arnold in the following style: "They know that a cold reception awaits their works unless they are able to clothe the character of their subjects in the popular robes of superstition. Mr. Arnold realized this when he wrote his 'Life of Lincoln.' He had been most forcibly reminded of the fate of two biographies of his own subject which had already appeared, Holland's and Lamon's. Holland's by catering to the popular prejudice, regardless of truth, had been financially a success. Lamon's work by adhering to the truth, regardless of popular prejudice, had been financially a failure. Determined to profit by these examples and intimidated by the threats and entreaties of those who had resolved to secure for Christianity the influence of the great emancipator's name, Arnold dare not give the facts regarding Lincoln's religious belief." This man would have us believe that Arnold wrote his biography with only a mercenary motive regardless of truth. Listen to what Hon. E. B. Washburne says on this very point: "From the time that Mr. Arnold entered Congress, at the breaking out of the Civil War, he became one of the most trusted advisers of Mr. Lincoln, and few men outside of the Cabinet were more frequently consulted by him in important matters. No one knew better Mr. Lincoln's thoughts and intentions than Mr. Arnold, and no one enjoyed his confidence to a higher degree. It may be truly said that no man was better qualified to write a series and authoritative life of Mr. Lincoln and to enlighten the public in respect to the character, career and services of that illustrious man."

Dr. Byron Sunderland, a noble Christian minister o Washington City, having given out what he heard from Lincoln's own lips is impeached in the following manner:

"He can probably put more falsehood and calumny in a page of foolscap than any priest out of prison."

Hon. Ninian Edwards, brother-in-law of the president, after telling what he knew of his noble relative's views, is summarily brought to bay in the following manner by an orthodox free thinker: "Being a believer in Christianity himself, he considered Lincoln's infidelity a grave defect in his character and was vexed to see that this controversy had given it such wide publicity. To assist in removing this stain, as he regarded it, from his kinsman's name, he allowed to be published over his signature a statement which, unless his memory was very defective and treacherous, he must have known was untrue."

HIS POWER OF GIVING COMFORT.

"Come, ye disconsolate, wher'er ye languish;
Come to the mercy seat, fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts, Here tell your anguish;
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal.

Joy to the desolate, light of the straying,
Hope of the penitent, fadeless and pure,
Here speaks the Comforter, tenderly saying,
'Earth hath no sorrow that Heaven cannot cure.'

Here see the bread of life, see waters flowing,
Forth from the throne of God, pure from above;
Come to the feast of love; come, ever knowing,
Earth has no sorrow but Heaven can remove."

He was not the Comforter but lived to bear witness of the true Comforter. All around him were bleeding hearts. "In Rama there was a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted, because they are not." A widow of Boston had five sons all of whom had fallen for their country. On learning of the fact he hastens to offer his condolence in the following words: "I pray our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavements and leave only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride which must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom."

As his towering form leaned over the wounded Sickles when the stoutest heart scarcely dared to hope for the hero's recovery, Lincoln could say, "You will get well; I am a prophet today." More than once he would go through the hospitals, shaking the hands of the sick and wounded soldiers, inquiring their names, their state, and their regiments. He would, sometimes, pause and look into their faces a moment and kindly say: "God bless you."

HIS SUFFERINGS.

"For here in knotted cord and vein
I trace the varying chart of years;
I know the troubled heart, the strain,
The weight of Atlas and the tears."

"Again I see the patient brow,
That palm erewhile was wont to press;
And now 'tis furrowed deep, and now
Made smooth with hope and tenderness."

"A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," was applied to the Savior. This could have verily been said of Abraham Lincoln. Even before he started for Washington, he felt the piercing of the thorns prepared for him. He exclaims: "I see the storm coming." On his way to the seat of the government plots had been concocted to assassinate him. They hated him without a cause. In the midst of the mighty carnage of war his beloved son Willie died. The blow well nigh overwhelmed him. To a friend one day who was picturing to him the happy end of the war and how that his last days would be the best of all, he replied with pathos that language cannot describe: "I feel as though I shall never be glad any more."

After the terrible repulse at Fredericksburg, he exclaimed: "If there is a man out of perdition that suffers more than I do, I pity him." Hon. Schuyler Colfax, in his funeral oration said of him: "One morning, over two years ago, calling upon him on business, I found him looking more than usually pale and careworn, and inquired the reason. He replied, with the bad news he had received at a late hour the previous night, which had not yet been communicated to the press, he had not closed his eyes or breakfasted; and with an expression I shall never forget, he exclaimed: 'How willingly would I exchange places today with the soldier who sleeps on the ground in the Army of the Potomac.' Noah Brooks gives the following glimpse

of his affliction. "I shall never forget the picture of despair. He held a telegram in his hand, and as he closed the door and came toward us I mechanically noticed his face, usually sallow, was ashen in hue. The paper on the wall behind him was of the tint known as 'French Gray,' and even in that moment of sorrow and dread expectation I took in the thought that the complexion of the president's visage was almost exactly like that of the wall. He gave me the telegram and in a voice trembling with emotion said, 'Read it, news from the army.' The dispatch was from Gen. Butterfield, Hooker's Chief of staff, addressed to the War Department, and was to the effect that the army had been withdrawn from the south side of the Rappahannock, and was then safely encamped in its former position. The appearance of the president as I read these fatal words with trembling voice was piteous. Never as long as I knew him did he seem to be so broken, so disspirited, and so ghostlike. Clasping his hands behind his back, he walked up and down the room, saying, 'My God! My God! What will the country say! What will the country say!'

One day at Fortress Monroe he said to an army officer: "Colonel did you ever dream of a lost friend, and feel that you were holding sweet communion with that friend, and yet have a sad consciousness that it was not a reality? Just so I dream of my boy Willie." Overcome with emotion he dropped his head on the table and sobbed aloud. It was just this suffering, too that made his faith in God perfect. Well could he say with David, "When my heart is overwhelmed lead me to the rock that is higher than I."

HIS FAVORITE LITERATURE.

His mood ranged over a key board of many octaves, on which he played at its extremes. Now he would be relishing a good, witty story which chanced to come his way, and again he would relapse into a gloom which was ghostlike. While his lighter vein would find a treat in Nasby's letters, yet, as is well known, literature of the pathetic order best fed his sad nature. The mutterings of Job as he more than once admitted, furnished him wholesome meditation. The two poems which seemed to captivate him the most completely were Holmes's poem of "The Last Leaf," and "Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud." It is said he never grew tired reciting these beautiful stanzas, or wearied at hearing them uttered by others. The last Sunday of his life, he read the following from Macbeth: "Duncan is in his grave; After life's fitful fever he sleeps well; Treason has done his worst; nor steel, nor poison,malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing can touch him farther."

HIS LAST DAY.

"He wrestled ceaselessly through four black and dreadful purgatorial years, when God was cleansing the sins of the people as by fire. At last, the watchman beheld the gray dawn. The mountains began to give forth their forms from out the darkness, and the east came rushing toward us with arms full of joy for all the sorrows. Then it was for him to be glad exceedingly that he had sorrowed immeasurably." He stood in Richmond where the Confederacy recently had established its headquarters. He lived long enough to see their bows completely broken. His life was stretched out long enough to see that his Emancipation Proclamation, would forever be held sacred by the American people. Despite the fact that he had a presentiment that he would not long survive the war, the last day of his life was a happy one. Like a boy fresh from school, he was just coming out of a dreadful nightmare. He was intoxicated with joy. No more blood to be spilt was ointment to his tender heart. He was assassinated in a theatre. We would have ordered it otherwise. The free-thought world has reminded the church of this fact. They insist that Mr. Lincoln showed his irreverance for the church by going to a place of amusement generally proscribed by the churches.

Mr. Miner, an old friend and neighbor of the president, in a letter to the Boston Christian Leader; states the following: "Mrs. Lincoln informed me that the last day he lived was the happiest day of his life. The very last moment of his conscious life was spent in conversation with his wife about his future plans and what he wanted to do when his term of office expired. He said he wanted to visit the Holy Land and see those places hallowed by the footprints of the Savior. He said there was no city he so much desired to

see as Jerusalem, and with the word half spoken on his tongue the bullet from the pistol of the assassin entered the brain and the soul of the great and good president was carried by the angels to the New Jerusalem above."

Mr. Lincoln went to the theatre that fatal night more to gratify others than to gratify himself. He along with Grant was advertised to be present. General Grant was called away to a neighboring city, thus the president went in order to not dissappoint anyone. When the intelligence of his death reached the people, their grief could not be concealed. Mourners went about the street. No man could stand up and apologize for the crime and live. As the remains of the great and good man were borne across the country to his western home, the people lifted up their voices at his coming and wept.

His face in death had a Christ-like appearance. His features easily recalled his words so lately uttered, "With malice toward none, with charity for all." His name is now sweet to the ears of all people. He lifted his beloved land high up toward God. His wrestlings with the Almighty; his struggles in the garden of darkness and despair; his trained heart, hearkening to the voice of the Father, will ever associate him with the best of the Lord's anointed.

NOTE.—A copy of RELIGIOUS VIEWS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN will be sent to any address, postpaid, on receipt of 25 cents to
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